



SUNSHINE STATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sunshine State Athletic Association and Who We Play For Create a Life Saving Partnership

Valrico, Florida, September 1, 2023- The Sunshine State Athletic Association (SSAA) is excited to announce our new partnership Who We Play For (WWPF). WWPF is the largest heart screening nonprofit in the United States. They have educated millions on sudden cardiac arrest, helped to place thousands of AEDs and donated millions of dollars to hundreds of schools and athletic programs across Florida and the country.

The primary goal through this partnership is to eliminate preventable sudden cardiac arrest through early detection and save lives. In the United States each year an estimated 7,000- 23,000 young people suffer Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) annually. SCA is the #1 cause of death in sports and on school campuses. The SSAA and WWPF will coordinate and provide free heart screenings for member school athletes. The SSAA strongly encourages school participation in this program. This partnership between the SSAA and WWPF will be the first of its kind in high school athletics.

“We are excited about the impact of this partnership and the opportunity to prioritize the health and safety of our athletes,” said Stuart Weiss, President of the SSAA. “We believe that by working together, we can make a significant difference in preventing sudden cardiac arrest and ensuring the well-being of our student athletes.”

“We are proud to work with the SSAA to bring our program to more schools across the state of Florida,” said Ralph Maccarone, Chairman for WWPF’s Board of Directors. “We look forward to working with the SSAA and its member schools, students and families to work to save lives.”

Additionally, WWPF is proud to become the official Automated External Defibrillator (AED) partner of the SSAA. All funds generated from the sale of AEDs will be directed towards providing free heart screenings for member schools. WWPF has partnered with the leading AED companies to ensure the highest quality equipment for our member schools. All funds generated will be used to cover ECG heart screenings within our organization.

About Who We Play For:

Who We Play For (WWPF) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization founded in memory of our teammate, Rafe Maccarone, who died of SCA with us at high soccer practice. Over a decade later, by bringing together the national/ international medical experts, WWPF has become the largest heart screening nonprofit in the United States, educated millions on SCA, helped to place



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thousands of AEDs and donated millions of dollars to hundreds of schools and athletic programs across Florida and the country.

Evan Ernst, Executive Director, Who We Play For
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About Sunshine State Athletic Association:

The Sunshine State Athletic Association – formed in 2008 as an alternative for Florida high school sports programs. The Association has grown into a multiple sport athletic organization made up of private, public and charter schools located throughout Florida. SSAA’s focus is to promote good sportsmanship and fair play, and student-athlete safety. The goal of the Association is to provide members with a safe, equitable, and enjoyable athletic experience. Additional information on the SSAA can be found at: www.sunshinestateathletics.com.

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